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030856Z Mar 04

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KATHMANDU 000396

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SA/INS AND S/CT  
LONDON FOR POL - GURNEY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/02/2014

TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: NEPAL: S/CT COORDINATOR AMB. COFER BLACK  
REAFFIRMS USG SUPPORT IN MEETINGS AT FOREIGN MINISTRY

REF: A. KATHMANDU 0279

[1](#)B. KATHMANDU 0280

Classified By: AMB. MICHAEL E. MALINOWSKI. REASON: 1.5 (B,D).

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SUMMARY  
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[1](#)1. (C) On March 3 Ambassador J. Cofer Black, Coordinator for Counterterrorism, accompanied by Ambassador Michael Malinowski, held separate meetings with de facto Foreign Minister Ambassador Bekh Bahadur Thapa and Foreign Secretary Madhu Raman Acharya. Ambassador Black reconfirmed USG support for Nepal's struggle against terror. Both Thapa and Acharya expressed deep appreciation for USG assistance, which they cited as critical to the progress made thus far against the Maoist insurgency. Thapa acknowledged that Nepal's complaints to European governments about private support for the Maoists have borne little fruit. While the Indians have increased their cooperation in cracking down on Maoists operating on their soil, Thapa noted, "they could enforce what they say more effectively." End summary.

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GON APPRECIATES U.S. SUPPORT  
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[1](#)2. (SBU) On March 3 Ambassador J. Cofer Black, Coordinator for Counterterrorism (S/CT), accompanied by Ambassador Michael Malinowski, met separately with Ambassador-at-large and de facto Foreign Minister Dr. Bekh Bahadur Thapa and Foreign Secretary Madhu Raman Acharya. Ambassador Black underscored USG support for Nepal's fight against terror perpetrated by Maoist insurgents. He stressed that he came as a representative of the Department of State and the U.S. Government to demonstrate his nation's appreciation of the challenges facing Nepal and admiration for its steadfastness against the scourge of terror. There is no room in the civilized world for the Maoists' gratuitous violence, Ambassador Black said, and Nepal's courageous struggle has earned the USG's sympathy and interest. He hoped to learn how the USG could continue to support the Government of Nepal (GON) in this important effort. He urged the GON to sign and ratify all 12 international counterterrorism conventions.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Secretary Acharya and Ambassador Thapa each expressed deep appreciation for U.S. support in countering the insurgency. The GON has made significant strides against the Maoists, both said, thanks in large part to U.S. security assistance, noting that the insurgents have been unable to launch a major attack against GON forces since breaking the ceasefire in August (Note: On March 2 the Maoists attacked the district headquarters in the eastern district of Bhojpur. Details septel. End note.). As a result, the GON is able to shift its focus to containing the conflict and to exploring the possibility of conducting elections in some locations, Thapa said. Security assistance from friendly nations such as the U.S., UK, and India have boosted the capacity and confidence of the Army and police, Thapa said, leading to a "general sense of optimism . . . that we are moving ahead." Following his recent visits to remote areas of western Nepal (Ref A), King Gyanendra has directed the GON to restore services and reassert law and order in the parts of the country most directly affected by the insurgency, Thapa noted. Continued USG support will be needed, he emphasized, to follow up on these promising steps.

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INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR MAOISTS?  
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[1](#)4. (C) Thapa noted that from time to time the Maoists make statements--which are quickly seized upon by the international community--that they are ready to resume negotiations. The Prime Minister has made clear on a number of occasions that "the door is still open for talks," he continued, but since the Maoists already have broken off

talks unilaterally twice before, the GON must carefully scrutinize the sincerity of such statements. In the past, the Maoists have used ceasefires to build up their depleted strength and supplies, he added.

15. (C) Ambassador Black asked Ambassador Thapa for his assessment of the Maoists' success in winning international sympathy. Individuals and some NGOs in "certain Northern European liberal democracies" are comparatively sympathetic to the Maoists, Thapa conceded. Sometimes such NGOs may channel funding to Maoist sympathizers in the guise of workshops and seminars for the underprivileged or some other development effort, he indicated. When the GON brings such matters to the attention of the governments concerned, Thapa said, they say they are unable to prohibit such activities in their pluralistic societies. The GON could do more to improve public relations efforts to educate the international community about Maoist atrocities and perfidy, he acknowledged.

16. (C) Ambassador Black asked if the GON were satisfied with the extent of Indian cooperation to counter the insurgency. While noting the February 8 arrests of two top Maoist leaders in India (Ref B), Thapa cited a general perception that key Maoists have free mobility on Indian soil and easily maintain contact with like-minded organizations in India. Although he described "recent positive signals" from the Government of India, Thapa reflected that the situation would improve if "they could enforce what they say more effectively." Cooperation with Indian security officials has progressed over the past six months, he reported, but added that unless the GON tightens its borders, weapons and new recruits will continue to flow back and forth between the two neighbors.

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THAPA TO WASHINGTON?  
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17. (U) Ambassador Thapa said that he hopes to visit Washington after he travels to Geneva to address the UN Commission on Human Rights later in the month. Ambassador Black said that he would welcome his visit. (Note: According to press reports and Ministry sources, Ambassador Thapa is expected to be named Foreign Minister on March 4. End note.)

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COMMENT  
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18. (C) Both Acharya and Thapa sounded optimistic notes in their assessments of progress against the insurgency, and each referred to as-yet unscheduled elections as an increasingly brighter prospect. Besides apparent improvements in the capacity of the security forces, signs of more robust bilateral cooperation between India and Nepal on security issues may be largely responsible for these heightened hopes. As Thapa noted, however, the open border shared by India and Nepal presents greater challenges for the GON--and greater opportunities for the Maoists--than these modest improvements can sufficiently counter.

19. (U) Ambassador Black has cleared this message.  
MALINOWSKI